

these are merely excuses to prevent the Congress from doing the right thing.

Congress is facing an unprecedented opportunity to end the inequality and disenfranchisement of the U.S. citizens of Puerto Rico by enabling them the exercise of the most fundamental right of all democracies, self-determination, a right that the United States has defended as a Nation throughout the world. It would, indeed, be a national shame if this right were not extended to its own citizens.

We must reject the ignorant, fear-inspired movement to stop the democratic process and deny self-determination to Puerto Rico. As the world's leader, one of the main objectives of U.S. foreign policy has been to promote and defend democracy and self-determination around the world. It might be a good idea to begin applying our policies to our own citizens seeking this right.

I am asking for your support when H.R. 856 reaches the House floor. The U.S. citizens of Puerto Rico and every American committed to freedom, democracy, and justice will be grateful. It is the right thing to do.

CONGRATULATIONS TO TARA LIPINSKY, OLYMPIC GOLD MEDAL WINNER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 21, 1997, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. KNOLLENBERG) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. KNOLLENBERG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Tara Lipinsky on her outstanding accomplishment on behalf of the United States of America, winning as she did the Olympic gold in women's figure skating at Nagano.

Ms. Lipinsky, the youngest person to ever win a gold medal in an individual event in winter Olympics history, has made all America proud with her wonderful performances. The grace and elegance that Tara Lipinsky brings to her skating is invigorating, and the drive and determination that she has exercised to develop her talent sets a shining example for all of us.

Ms. Lipinsky, along with fellow Olympians Todd Eldredge, Jerod Swallow, Elizabeth Punsalan, Jessica Joseph and Charles Butler, all Olympians, all trained at the Detroit Skating Club in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan. As the Member of Congress with the great honor to represent Michigan's 11th Congressional District, which by the way includes Bloomfield Hills, it is also my home, I would like to take this opportunity to also congratulate the coaches, the family members, and everyone else that was involved that make the Detroit Skating Club one of the best training facilities for ice skaters in the world.

Mr. Speaker, Tara Lipinsky's victory has touched hearts around the world and made the citizens of my district

and across the country extremely proud. We owe all our Olympic athletes a hearty well done and congratulations.

2000 CENSUS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 21, 1997, the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MALONEY) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, last week one of my colleagues came to the House floor and said that the planning for the 2000 census was done in secret. I am here today to put the facts on the table so that the American people can decide for themselves. Designing the 2000 census has been one of the most public processes in the history of the census.

Dr. Barbara Bryant, the director of the Census Bureau for President George Bush, began the process in 1991 shortly after the conclusion of the 1990 census. She took over the Census Bureau less than 4 months before the 1990 census began, and she knew that it could be improved. The results from the 1990 census reinforced that decision.

In partnership with Congress, Dr. Bryant began the process that resulted in the census design we are debating today. To achieve a better census design, Congress turned to the National Academy of Sciences.

The gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. ROGERS) testified before the House Subcommittee on the Census in 1991 and said there is a need for "an independent review of the census that is fundamental in nature, a back-to-basics, zero-based study that begins with no preconceived notions about what we collect or how we collect it. For that reason, I have pursued the idea of having the National Academy of Sciences conduct such a review. The Academy is credible, experienced, and more importantly, independent. Plus, I have been satisfied they can pull together a panel of fine minds, capable of blending fresh policy viewpoints with an understanding of statistical methods."

In 1992 Congress passed H.R. 3280, "a bill to provide for a study to be conducted by the National Academy of Sciences on how the government can improve the decennial census of population, and on related matters." That study laid out the blueprint for the 2000 census.

It has been alleged that there has been no congressional involvement in planning the census. But how can that be, when the design for the census is based on a study mandated by Congress? In addition, between 1991 and 1994 there were 15 House and Senate hearings on the 2000 census.

If there has been any neglect, it has been since 1995 when Congress abolished the Subcommittee on the Census. In 1995, 1996 and 1997 there were only 4 hearings on the 2000 census.

My colleagues have suggested that there has been no public involvement in designing the census. Again, I would like to have the facts speak for themselves. In 1992 the Secretary of Commerce established an Advisory Committee on the 2000 Census made up of nearly 50 organizations. I would like to put a list of those organizations into the RECORD.

The list referred to follows:

The National Governors Association, the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials, the American Statistical Association, the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials, the Business Roundtable, the Council of Chief State School Officers, the Federation for American Immigration Reform, the National Association of Counties, the National Association of Secretaries of State, the National Association of Towns and Townships, and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

Mr. Speaker, these organizations met over 20 times since 1992 and each meeting has been open to the public.

The activities of public involvement were not just here in Washington. The director of the Census Bureau and the Under Secretary for Economic Statistics at the Department of Commerce have gone to scores of cities and held town meetings to get public involvement. At each of these town meetings they have solicited public input on the plans that they have put before the public for conducting a fair and accurate census for 2000.

My colleagues have criticized the administration for developing a census designed by the experts. I wonder why they would want a census designed by amateurs.

The facts are that developing the design for the 2000 census has been one of the most public processes in the history of the census. The process has included major constituent groups, Congress and the public. The design for the census has been endorsed by experts and nonexperts alike.

It is very simple. In 1990 the census had an error rate of over 10 percent. Those who oppose a more accurate census want to go back to the way it was done in 1990, even if it costs more, because they believe that the errors in the census work to their advantage. The administration has put forward a plan to reduce the errors in the census and make it more fair and accurate.

The choice is simple. Do we move into the 21st century with a census that uses modern, scientific methods to count absolutely everyone? Or do we do it the old way and pay more to get a census that has millions of errors in it? I say we follow the plan of Dr. Bryant and the National Academy of Sciences.

ORGANIZATIONS THAT SUPPORT SAMPLING

American Jewish Committee, National Association of Counties, American Statistical Association, U.S. Conference of Mayors, Council of Professional Associations on Federal Statistics, Children's Defense Fund, Arab American Anti-Discrimination League, American Sociological Association, National League of Cities, and Cuban American National Council, Inc.

National Association of Business Economists, Japanese American Citizens League,

Association of University Business and Economic Research, National Asian Pacific American Legal Consortium, Association of Public Data Users, Americans for Democratic Action, National Community Action Foundation, Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance, Consortium of Social Science Associations, and AFL-CIO.

Labor Council for Latin American Advancement, Leadership Conference on Civil Rights, League of United Latin American Citizens, Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund, NAACP, National Council of La Raza, National Urban League, Organization of Chinese Americans, Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, California Rural League Assistance, and American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials.

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STATEHOOD FOR PUERTO RICO

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SNOWBARGER). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 21, 1997, the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. DUNCAN) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak on the question of whether Puerto Rico will become our 51st State. Last year I was the only member of the Committee on Resources who voted against this bill on the final committee vote. I did not speak against this bill at the time or try to get anyone else to vote against it, primarily due to my great respect for and friendship with Chairman Young, the primary sponsor. Chairman Young and I agree on almost all issues, particularly on the need to open up a very small portion of Alaska to further oil production.

After I cast this lone dissenting vote, I was asked to visit Puerto Rico by its government and some of its leading citizens, and in an attempt to be as fair as possible, I went there for a weekend visit 8 or 9 months ago. While there, I met some of the nicest people I have met anyplace in this world. I was greatly impressed with the beauty of the island and the great progress that is being made toward freedom and a strong economy and away from the shackles of socialism.

I was impressed with the close ties and favorable feelings most Puerto Ricans have with and for the United States. I was told that Puerto Rico had sent more soldiers and sailors to the U.S. military than any other State per capita, and I really appreciate this.

I had never thought much about this before I went there, but Puerto Rico is closer to Washington, D.C., and the Southeastern United States than are some of our Western States. I believe that Puerto Rico is fast on its way to becoming an island paradise. Some of it already is.

Puerto Rico has a great future, if it continues moving even further toward a free market economy and lower taxes. The island is in a strategic location and could be a valuable asset to us militarily.

However, in spite of all the many good things there are about Puerto Rico and its people, I do not believe Puerto Rico should become a State at this time. First and foremost to me, the American people do not support this expansion. In every poll or survey, the people of my district hold opinions almost identical to the national average. I have not received even one phone call, comment, letter or postcard in favor of this from my district. Every local contact has been against this. This is very important to me.

Second, according to the Congressional Research Service, Tennessee would potentially be one of six or seven States to lose a House Member if Puerto Rico becomes a State. This would not have much effect on me because most of the growth in our State has been in and around Knoxville and Nashville, so my district will be about the same or even possibly shrink in size for the foreseeable future. However, it would definitely hurt our State if we lose the equivalent of 11 percent of our House delegation.

Third, the GAO and others have estimated this could cost American taxpayers \$3 to 5 billion a year in added costs to the Federal Government. We are not in nearly as strong a shape economically as some people think with the stock market at record levels. Also in about 8 to 10 years when the baby-boomers begin retiring, we are about to face some of the greatest costs we have ever seen in the history of this country. With national debt of \$5.5 trillion right now and a debt almost quadruple that when you figure in future pension liabilities, we really cannot afford to do this until Puerto Rico strengthens its economy significantly.

Fourth, when I went to Israel 3 or 4 years ago, our group met, among many others, with the woman who headed Israeli immigration. She told us they gave all immigrants to Israel up to 2 years of intensive language training if they needed it because Israel felt that it was very important to have a common, unifying national language.

It is fine with me if everyone in this country learns Spanish or some other second language, but I think all U.S. citizens need to be truly, honestly fluent in English. We need a unifying national language. Look at the problems Canada has now with many in French-speaking Quebec wanting to split Canada in the middle. English is and should be our national language, even if some do not like it.

I am told that a little over 20 percent of the people in Puerto Rico are fluent in English. I believe Puerto Rico should greatly emphasize the English language training if they want to become a part of our Union.

Fifth and finally, some say only a little over half of Puerto Ricans want to become a State of the United States if they are given a truly free choice with fair definitions. I do not believe we should add any State unless an extremely high percentage, at least 75

percent or even more, want to become citizens. We certainly do not need to add a State where almost half of the people do not want it.

Puerto Rico should vote first. They can hold a referendum without our permission. The Congress should not take a vote that as a practical matter we cannot get out of unless, and until we have a truly fair, accurate assessment of how many Puerto Ricans really want this.

For all of these reasons, Mr. Speaker, I believe we should maintain our present friendly, close relationship with Puerto Rico as a U.S. Territory.

PEACE CORPS DAY 1998

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 21, 1997, the gentleman from California (Mr. FARR) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. FARR of California. Mr. Speaker, it has been 35 years since I joined the American Peace Corps, and I rise today to celebrate this month and this very day, the 37th anniversary of the Peace Corps.

It was started on March 1, 1961, when President Kennedy signed legislation passed by this Congress creating the Peace Corps.

Today there are more than 150,000 returned volunteers in the United States, five of whom serve in the House of Representatives and two in the United States Senate.

Today, because of the anniversary of the Peace Corps, there are more than 6,000 returned volunteers that are presently, as I speak, working in schools throughout the United States to bring a program called World Wise Schools. They bring the cross-cultural awareness of these countries that they served in to the school children of America.

I just participated in a program like that downtown at the Peace Corps headquarters, where we had life interaction with students from South Africa, that was being taught by an American Peace Corps volunteer from Washington, D.C.

Today there are 84 countries in the world that have invited the Peace Corps to be in them. There are 6,500 volunteers that are now serving overseas. They are addressing the critical development needs on a person-to-person basis, helping spread and gain access to clean water; to grow more food; to help prevent the spread of AIDS; to teach English, math and science; to help entrepreneurs start new businesses; and to work with nongovernmental organizations to protect our environment.

In fact, the demand for Peace Corps far exceeds the supply. For my conservative friends on the other side of the aisle, I wanted you to recall that the President has asked for expansion of the Peace Corps in his address to the Congress here just last month. In his 1999 budget request, he wants to put